

## INDUSTRY IN BROOKLINE

James Driscoll

Delivered general  
20, 1912

Industry is generally considered to be the employment of much labor and capital in any branch of trade or manufacture. As such, there has been very little in the town of Brookline. Miss Harriet F. Woods in her Historical Sketches of Brookline, published in 1874, opens her chapter on Local Industry by saying: "It is customary to record, in the history of a town, some account of its various industrial interests, but Brookline, being but a suburb of Boston, has little to offer in that line." Mr. John Gould Curtis, in his History of Brookline, published in 1933, writes in the same vein and starts his chapter on Industry and the Ways of Trade with the following sentence: "There is not a great deal to be said about the industrial life of a community devoted primarily to homes." So, in this paper of mine, it would seem that a definition of industry meaning a steady application of labor to business would afford a wider scope in reviewing the various businesses of the town during the early horse and buggy days.

From the Annals of Music in America by Henry C. Laheo, published by Marshall Jones Company of Boston in 1922 is an interesting article of 1787: "First pipe organ west of the Alleghanies set up in Cookstown (near Fayette Street) Pennsylvania, was built by Joseph Downer, who was born in Brookline, Massachusetts Jan. 28, 1767 and trekked to Pennsylvania with his family. The organ is preserved at the Carnegie Institute in Pittsburgh.



Mr. Curtis, in this same book, writes that there was a grist mill and possibly a "fulling leather mill", whatever that may be, owned by Griffin Crafts in the latter part of the 17th century and located on Muddy River Brook, probably at Willow Pond, which is on Pond Avenue almost opposite the Free Hospital for Women. Whether George Griggs ever built a dam at Muddy River Bridge as he contracted to, is a question. The date of the contract was February 24, 1771, and from the data available, a guess that it was built at Willow Pond seems most rasonable. There was a chocolate mill on this pond, which may have been built after the dam was constructed, but there is nothing recorded other than that it existed. The first chocolate mill in North America was located on the banks of the Neponset River and owned by John Hanan in 1765, who had first hired a room in the grist mill and later took over the entire mill. The manufacture of chocolate at Neponset River still goes on, but the mill at Willow Pond was discontinued and a forge set up in the building and the power used to run a trip hammer. Mr. Faxon, who later moved to Roxbury, came into possession of the forge and made hoes and shovels; but, during the war of 1812 he converted his plant to making cannon. There is no mention of a scarcity of civilian goods, but, perhaps John Parker, who had war contracts and became very wealthy, helped his neighbor with orders for war material. Parker Hill was named for him and the hill at the Mission Church was known as Faxon Hill.

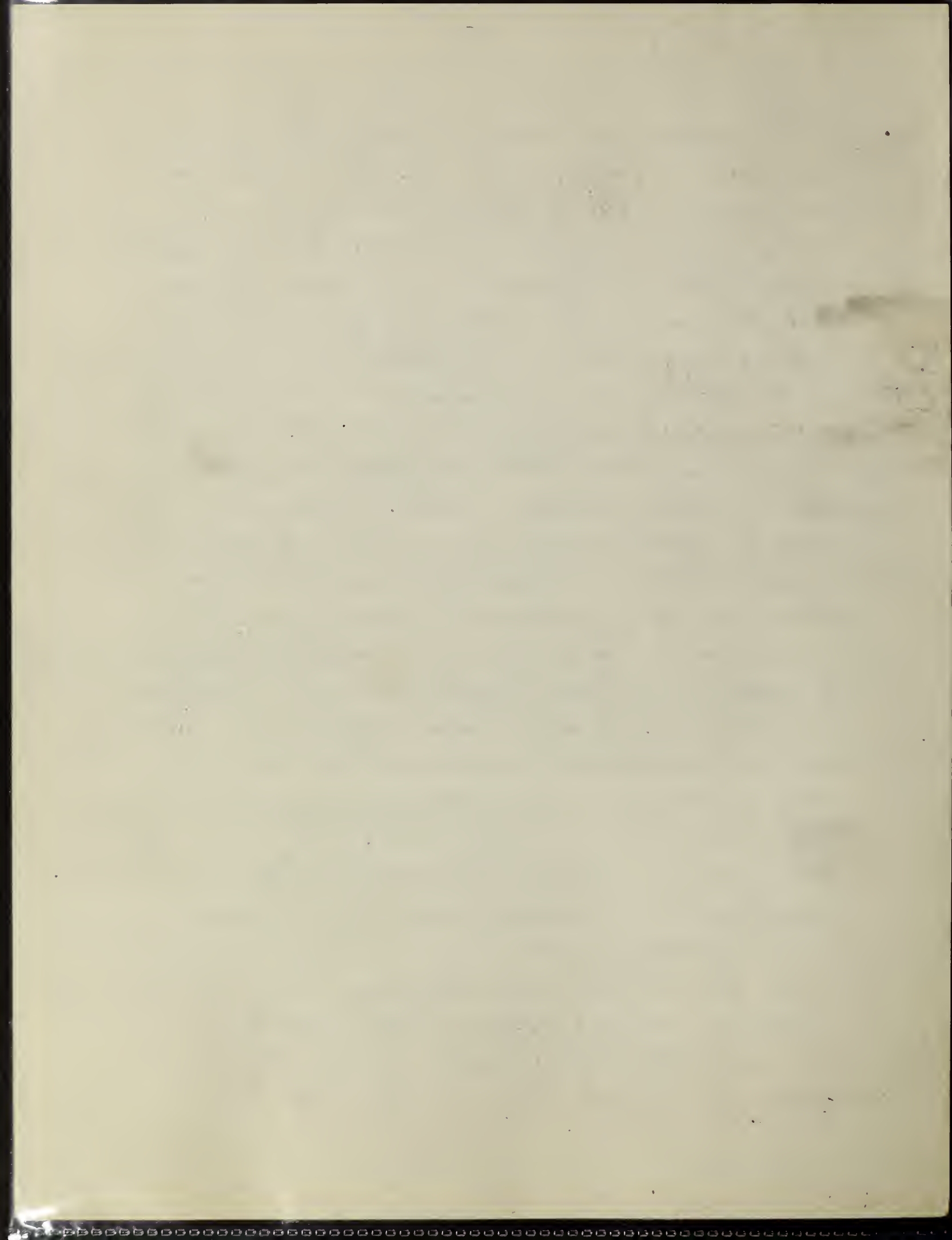
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Erosamon Drew built the first saw mill in the town on Palmer Brook, off Newton Street in 1693. This enterprise was so successful that in 1715 the town laid out a road leading to it from the Old Sherborn Road now Heath Street. The present Saw Mill Brook, which runs from Hammond's Pond, under Heath Street and Newton Street and on to the Charles River, was named for this mill. This road appears to be the old wood road continuing the present Arlington Road from Heath Street along the edge of the low land. It had been used in recent years as a bridle path.

In 1837 there were three tanneries in the town that tanned 2,500 hides of a value of \$16,000. Brighton was the chief market for livestock in New England and it was a common sight to see herds of cattle, and occasionally of sheep, driven through Brookline Village and up Washington Street to Brighton. Starting down in Rhode Island with a few head, cattle were picked up from the farmers along the road so that the herd was at its maximum through Brookline. It was but a short distance to haul the hides from the Brighton slaughterhouse down Washington Street to a tannery located at the corner of Beacon and Washington Streets, owned by John Robinson and Enos Withington, who bought the land from Robert Sharpe. Enos Withington retired from the business and devoted himself to agriculture. His son was Town Treasurer. The place was known as Robinson's Tannery and the racks were still to be seen before the widening of Beacon Street in 1887. The brook that furnished the water necessary for this tannery still flows in a covered concrete channel across Park Street to School and Harvard Streets, to Brook Street and then into Muddy River.



Brookline was originally a residential suburb of Boston. In the early days it consisted chiefly of detached homes, fine estates, farms, and orchards, with only the usual stores, shops, and offices necessary for daily life. Originally farming was the chief industry. Fruits and vegetables were sold in Boston where the rights of the Brookline farmers were protected by a clerk of the market, Edward Kirby, appointed in 1662.

In all the histories of the town the names of Crafts, Davis, Stearns, Ward, White, Jones, Coolidge, and Griggs are mentioned as well-known farmers. The farmers I remember personally were Thomas Griggs, who farmed the land on Washington Street running through to Beacon Street; his father, old Deacon Griggs, a very old man, lived in a house right on Washington Street almost opposite Gardner Path. Deacon Timothy Corey cultivated his farm on Washington Street between what is now Salisbury Road and Evans Road, with an orchard on the Beacon Street side of the property. The Corey house is still standing as a modern home. William Griggs had his farm on Harvard Street about opposite the Devotion School. The Coolidge farm on Harvard Street near the Allston line seemed to have ceased being a farm after the Corey Hill toboggan chute was built in from Winchester Street right through the old farm toward Harvard Street. Mr. William Hyde owned a farm on Newton Street across from the Country Club, and it is still under cultivation as the Brandagee Estate. All the other farms have been cut up with house lots and built upon. Mr. Hyde was an active farmer and an active member of the Handel and Hayden Society when he was eighty years old. His daughter taught in the old Putterham School. The locality of the old Ward farm is still referred to as "The Farm", that

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section between Morss Avenue, the Parkway, and the foot of High Street hill. It was the first to be laid out in house lots in 1860. Mr. Goodenough on South Street was noted for the cider he made, and no other was suitable for mince meat. Mr. Stearns, who lived on Boylston Street near Summer Road, gave one cider to drink, but refused to sell any. The last time I saw oxen hitched to a cart I learned that they belonged to Eben Reed who lived on Boylston Street at Reservoir Lane. He had horses and cows and a big barn, and sold his land to the town for the present Heath School. On town meeting day, about five o'clock, after the polls had closed, Mr. Reed would be seated outside the polls listening to the nominations from the floor and elections by voice vote of Eben Reed to several minor town offices, one of which was keeper of the pound. The pound was in the rear of St. Lawrence Church on Pound Lane and was thirty feet square, enclosed by a five foot stone wall with a strong gate. Stray animals found on the streets were locked in until the owner came and ransomed them by paying the keeper's charge. I have often looked in the pound as a child expecting to see Pegasus.

The first scales were set up in Harvard Square by William Aspinwall. There was a horizontal beam supported in the middle and, after the horses were unhitched, the wagon to be weighed was lifted by 56-pound weights on the other end of the balance. Later, before the Civil War, there were two platform scales in the town: one on Boylston Street outside Bacon's grocery store at the corner of Washington Street, and one at Coolidge's

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store at the corner of Beacon and Harvard Streets. All I ever saw weighed were loads of hay and occasionally, a horse. The onlookers used to bet with each other as to the weight. /

In 1874 Brookline was reduced to an inland town when the area between Brighton Avenue and the Charles River was annexed to Boston so that Brighton could be joined to the city. However, Abbott's wharf at Cottage Farm continued to receive schooners loaded with lumber and coal, and the Dearborn lumber wagons carried lumber to various jobs in Brookline. The last string team I recall was on a lumber wagon with the driver seated on a plank extending over the nigh front wheel. Boards or planks were unloaded from the sloping body by releasing the dog on the roller, and were left in a neat pile. Cousens Brothers unloaded schooners at the wharf and delivered coal to customers throughout the town. Before the advent of dump and raised bodies, the wagons had high sides with loose transverse planks for a bottom for unloading. The construction of the Charles River dam ended navigation.

The opening of the Brookline branch of the Boston and Worcester Railway in 1848 put the stages that ran over the Boston neck to the city out of business. The tracks ended at Brookline Village and there was a turntable and roundhouse where the freight yard is now, on Pearl Street. The New England Railroad, which ran to Woonsocket, had its turntable at Cypress Street. The street crossed the tracks at grade, and the gates were tended by a

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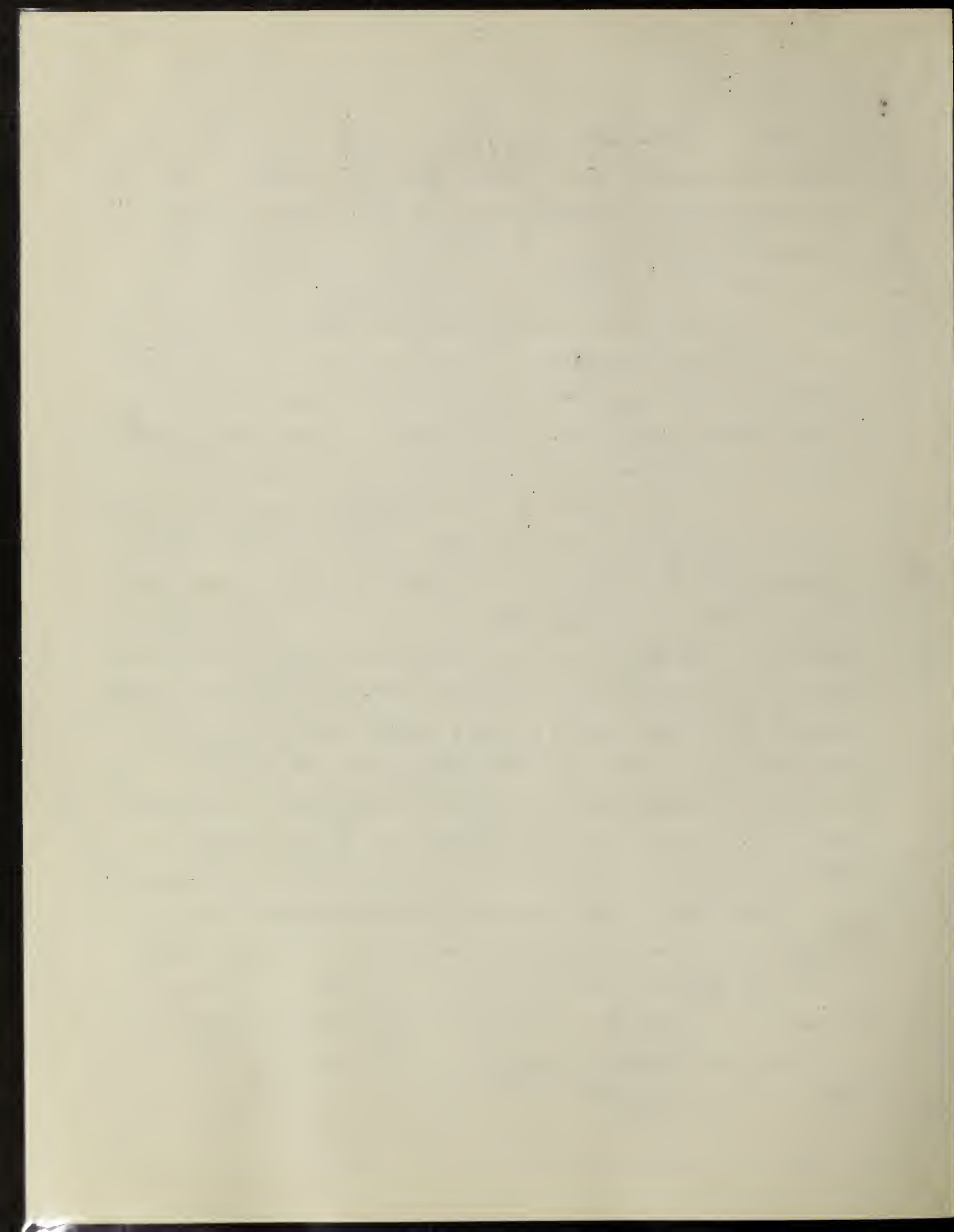


Mr. Harvey. It was some fun to push the unloaded table around, but when a locomotive was on, it was too heavy for us boys to turn. When the Boston and Albany took over the New England tracks in 1890 as far as Cook Street in Newton Highlands where the circuit started and ran to Riverside, then there was no more need for turntables. The post office was in the Brookline railroad station. In 1886 when the bridge was widened and Station Street built, the station was moved easterly to its present location, and later the post office was moved to Washington Street. After these changes, the homey atmosphere of the place seemed gone.

The first horsecar in Brookline ran from Brookline Village to Boston over Tremont Street in 1859. Two horses pulled the car on iron rails, but they were helped over Faxon Hill by a tow horse that was hooked onto the car at the bottom of the hill and unhooked at the top. In case the rail was blocked, the car could be jumped off the tracks and dragged around the block. In summer there were open cars with seats across the car, smoking was allowed in the two rear seats, and a curtain on each side could be let down when it rained. The winter car was closed with an upholstered bench along each side. The floor was covered with straw in cold weather, but the drivers stood on the open platform dressed for the cold--some wore buffalo coats. When there was snow it took four horses to pull the car. The car barn was on Walnut Street at Morss Avenue and the horses were stabled in the rear of the barn on Juniper Street. Twice when there was a fire in the adjoining livery stable the horses were turned out and fifty cents a head paid for their return the next morning.

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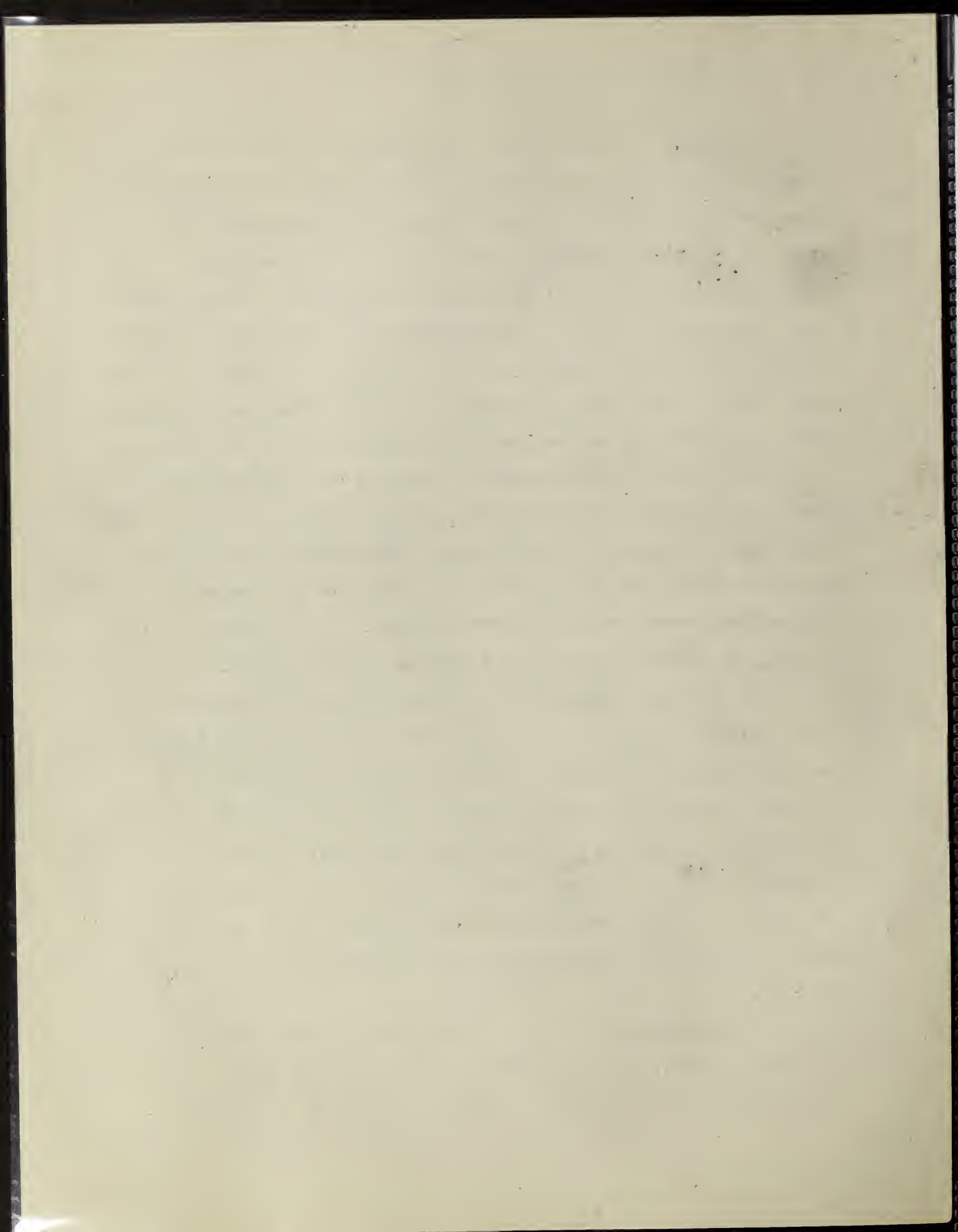
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After Huntington Avenue was opened for travel about 1890 a second line of horse cars was opened for Brookline and the rails were extended up Boylston Street and over Cypress Street to Chestnut also, up Washington Street to Park Street. There was also a line on Longwood Avenue to Coolidge Corner, but this was discontinued when the electric cars ran on Beacon Street. The running time was sixteen minutes from Park Street to Massachusetts Avenue, and the same time from there to the Tremont House at the Corner of Beacon and Tremont Streets, where there was a spur track at the curb near the Granary Burial Ground where the car was reversed by pulling out a pin from the whiffletree and hitching the horses on the other end. But, even in those days there was traffic congestion, and it would take half an hour to run from Park Street to Copley Square at the busy hour of five o'clock in the afternoon. The subway was built in 1895 to alleviate the traffic jams on Tremont Street.

The first electric trolley car to run in America was on Beacon Street on New Year's Day in 1889. The line was built with overhead trolleys. However, on Boylston Street in Boston, the electric current was taken from an arm that ran in a slot side of the rail, but this was not satisfactory in snow, and was soon abandoned and the overhead trolley permitted in the city. The village horse cars were superceded by trolley cars after the widening of Harvard Street and Boylston Street and tracks laid in them.

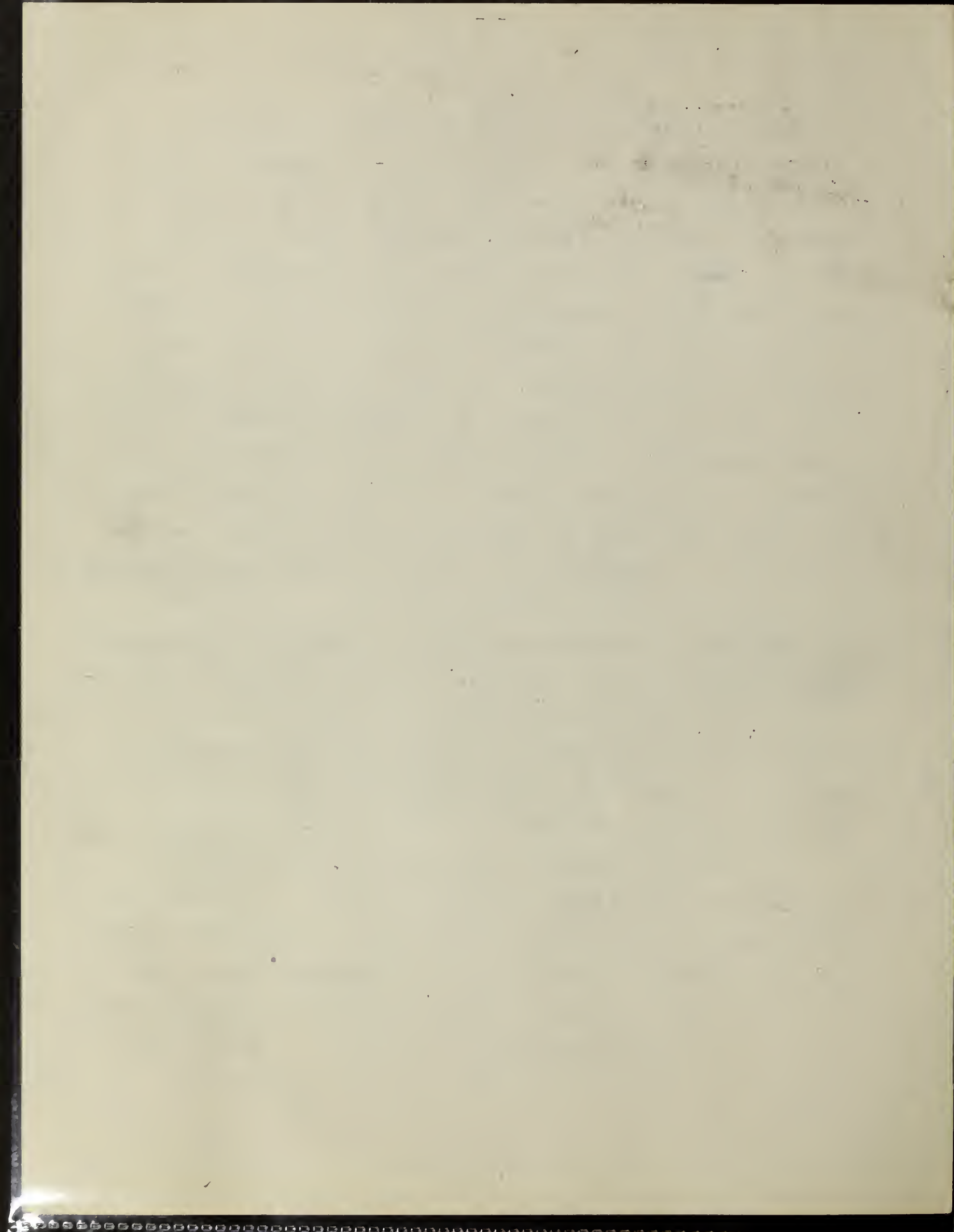
Like the automobile of today, everyone who could afford it owned a horse, and horses figured largely in the life of the community, for pleasure and recreation as well as for business.





Colonel Russell had a stock farm in West Roxbury where Mount Benedict Cemetery is now, which had a half-mile track around the summit of the hill, and it was there that Fearnot and Smuggler, famous old trotters, were trained. (Smuggler is still the trade name for a weather vane having a horse on it.) Clyde Park, on the site of the present Country Club, used to have running and trotting races, and Beacon Park, just up the Charles from Brookline was famous for its trotting races. The nearby mile ground, Brighton Avenue, was the course for racing and parading in sleighs. The course started at the Allston line and stopped at the Cottage Farm Bridge. The racers used the middle section; the paraders in single and double sleighs used the sides, with the racers jogging back for another brush. John Shepard was a dominant racer, sometimes changing horses three times in an afternoon to wind up with a fast pair. When the surface of the mile ground gave out, Washington Street from Beacon Street to Cypress, was used. During the last years of sleighing, the wide side of Beacon Street from St. Paul Street to St. Mary's Street was the popular place to see and to be seen. The widespread interest in horses was evidenced by the construction of a bridle path the entire length of Beacon Street, in 1887.

There were several livery stables where one could hire a horse and buggy, or other vehicle, with or without a driver. For formal occasions a pair of horses and a hack with a liveried coachman were available. Quinlan's stable on Washington Street, Clark's on Pearl Street, and O'Day's on Boylston Street maintained hackney service that met the trains with vehicles known as depot carriages. Willis's stable was on Francis Street and the Club Stables were off



Carlton Street at Beacon Street. Goodspeed's stable on Washington Street opposite the Town Hall furnished livery service and also had many boarders. Dr. Fred Percy kept his horse there and drove a Stanhope buggy; Dr. Sabine was driven in a Goddard buggy; and Dr. Tappan E. Francis enjoyed driving; he owned four horses, all good ones, and kept them in his own stable.

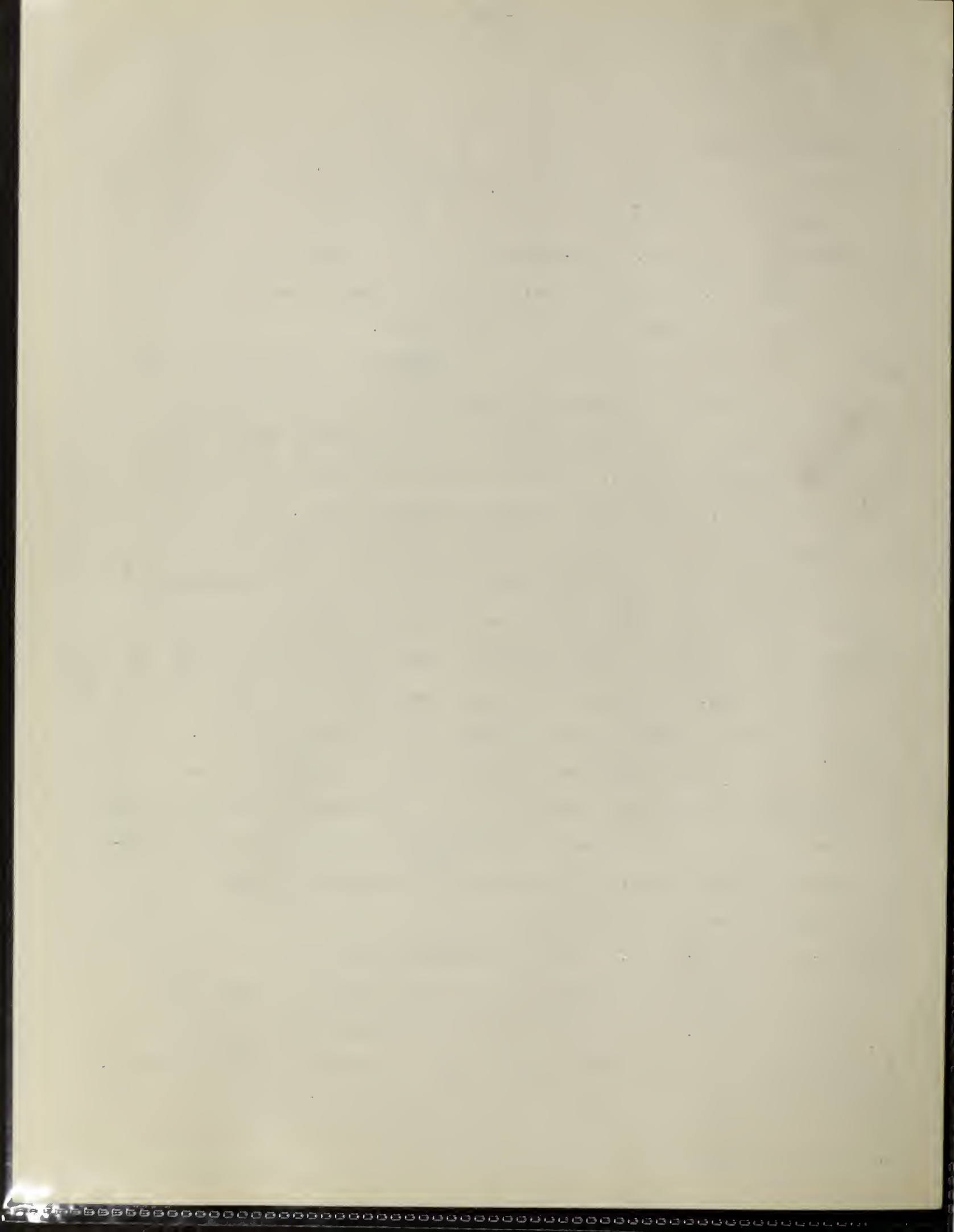
Hay and grain exclusively were sold by Bond on Boylston Street. Seamans' at Harvard Square and Coolidge Brothers' at Coolidge Corner were grocery stores, but they kept wagons busy hauling hay and grain. It was always interesting to see hay put in the loft; one man would open the hayloft door, reach out and hang a block onto the beam projecting overhead, while the driver unhitched one of the horses from the wagon and tied the whiffletree to the suspended rope reeved through a block, secured near the ground. The other end of the rope carried tongs that gripped the bales of hay. A well-trained horse needed no driver to hoist the load, leaving the men free to fasten and unfasten the tongs.

There were several express companies in the town. Buzzell's Express was quartered in the old Devotion barn until the town took over the property and stabled six of the highway department's horses there. This allowed the snowplows to reach the Longwood section earlier than when they had to come from the Cypress Street barn. Chase's Express was on Washington Street opposite the Fire House before moving to its new building near Walter Avenue. There were two other express companies: Danforth's and Weinstein's, established by foremen formerly employed by Chase.

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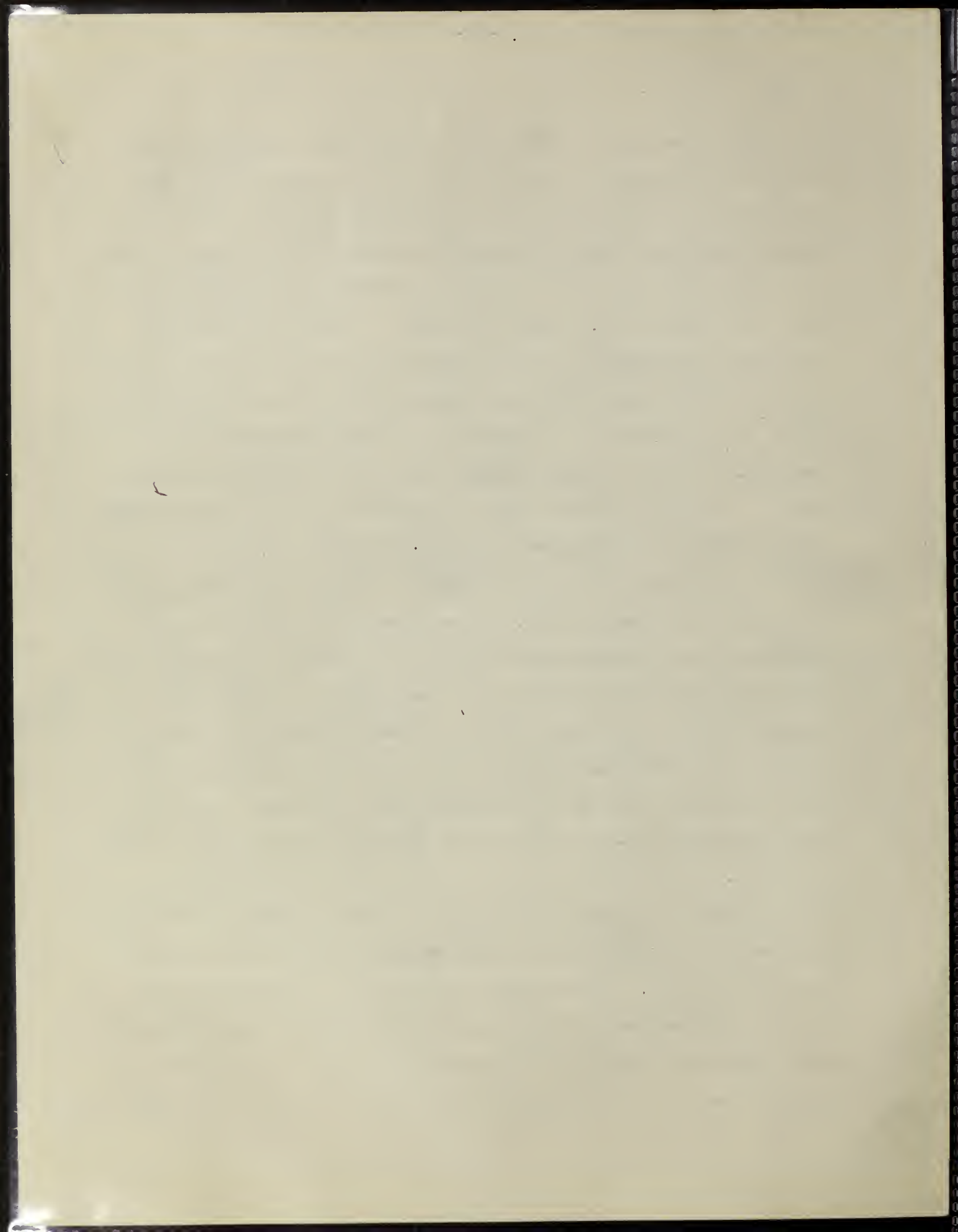
Trowbridge's express was located on School Street near Washington Street and Winchester's express was on Winchester Street. Hayes Brookline and Boston Express is the only one of these still operating. All these companies hauled merchandise from Boston, arriving in Brookline in the late afternoon and usually making delivery as soon as it was sorted. Small metal boxes fastened to posts and trees about town were used for written messages and orders for the express. These boxes were usually removed the night before the Fourth as they were a great temptation to the boys with cannon crackers. To serve local builders there were two heavy express wagons, one owned by Jerry Hayes and the other by Patrick McCarthy that had stands near Woodward's shop in the village.

To keep the dust from blowing, streets were watered by sprinklers on watering carts. These carts originally had a 500-gallon upright tank that was filled from a standpipe connected with the water main. The two-horse cart was driven under the pipe and filled from the top. Later, the tanks were larger and horizontal. The sprinklers were controlled by two foot levers and either half could be used. The width covered was about ten feet. Black-top roads banished auto-drivers' dusters and the watering carts at the same time.

In the spring, James Scott with several assistants beat the dust out of carpets with wooden whip handles on the Cypress Street playground. Carpets were tacked onto the floors and the yearly housecleaning, included taking them up and relaying them after the year's dust had been beaten from them. Hardwood floors, vacuum cleaners and carpet cleaning works have banished the beaters.

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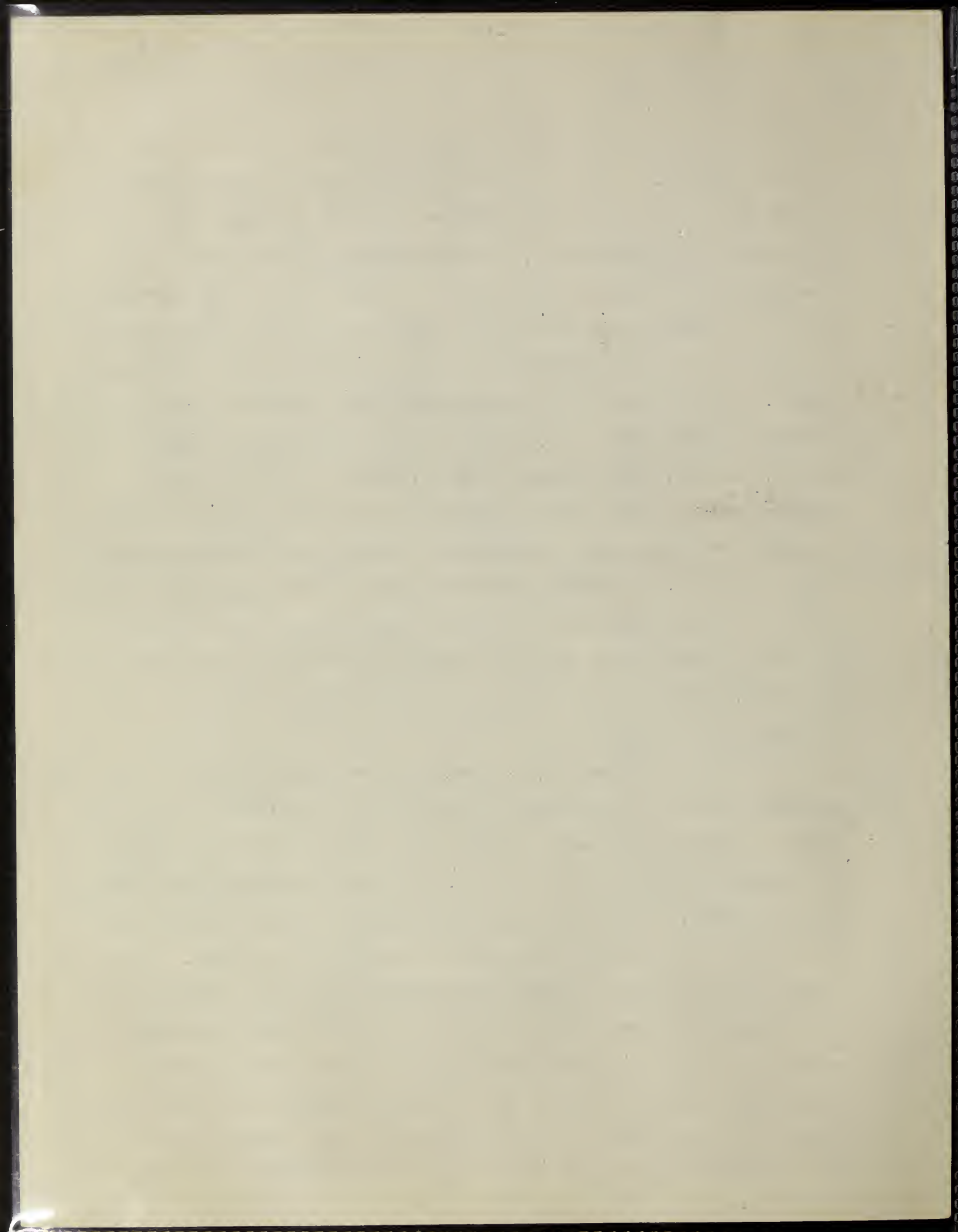


To take care of all the horses in town there were many blacksmith shops. Beginning near the Gas House at Brookline Avenue was Whittle's, whose sign read, "Farrier"; next was Nagle's in the old brick shop built before the Revolution by Thomas Brewer; continuing up Boylston Street were Duffy's, Burns', Bowen's, and Madores'; Nyhan's shop was on Chestnut Hill Avenue; Carroll's on Hammod Street; and there was one on Beacon Street near the Club Stables at Carlton Street. At the corner of Washington and High Streets was Royal Woodward's blacksmith and wheelwright shop. Besides the usual anvils, bellows, and wheelwright tools, there was a sling for lifting oxen off their feet, so that the two plates could be nailed on each hoof. There was a large round granite stone used for setting tires on wheels. The wooden wheel was laid on the stone with the hub in the hole in the center of the stone. The blacksmiths carried the red hot tire, which had been welded to size, and put it over the felly. Water was then poured on the hot tire to shrink it onto the wheel.

The horses to be shod, were tied with their heads to the shop wall and the shoer, with his wooden box of nails and tools, picked up the horse's foot, cut off the clinched nails and pulled off the old shoe with special tongs. He then trimmed the hoof with knife and rasp. The fitter took the hot shoe, he had been shaping, by a punch driven into a nail hole and tried it on the hoof. The smell of burning hoof was very distinctive, and to most people not unpleasant. When the fitter, after several tries, was satisfied with the fitting, he cooled the shoe in a tub of water and tossed it to the shoer who nailed it on the hoof, clinching the nails on outer side of the hoof. When the roads were icy, the smoothhorses had a hard time getting to the shops to be sharpened. This meant

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pulling off the shoes and putting on them sharp toe and heel calks about an inch long on heavy shoes. In very bad going there would be a line of horses outside the shops awaiting their turn.

Not a single one of these blacksmith shops is now in existence in Brookline, although there is a shop on Pearl Street run by Robbie Burns, a son of Woodward's foreman. They have vanished as completely as the old shop on Pond Avenue and the famous shop of Abraham Jackson, established in 1772, on Newton Street near South which had bullet holes in the door which were made by Indians.

M. W. Quinlan's carriage factory was on High Street with a blacksmith shop on Walnut Street, and a carpenter and wheelwright shop on Boylston Street adjoining the harness shop. Carriages that were used constantly required varnishing every year and there was usually work to be done on them in all the various shops. Newly varnished carriages were transported on a very low platform rig drawn by two horses. The first snowstorm brought about a scene of feverish activity, getting sleighs out of the shop and nearby storage for instant delivery. Practically all the work was done by hand and the varnish was mixed by Mr. Quinlan himself by a secret formula that required pure grain alcohol. The factory was famous in greater Boston for the excellence of its work. I know of a Goddard buggy made there, that lasted from the early eighties when it was made until the end of the buggy era, about 1912. 1920

All these preceding paragraphs have dealt with businesses connected with farming and the wide use of horses for both business and pleasure. In addition to these closely related businesses, there were a few other outstanding industries. The Brookline Gas Company was organized in 1851. The gas was made in a brick building on



Washington Street at the corner of Brookline Avenue with coal coming by rail to a shed on the site of the present Water Department pipe yard on Pearl Street. The coal was hoisted in buckets from the cars by an engine and was dumped into small cars which were pushed on rails on a trestle over the street to the gas house. The surplus was stored in a shed and kept as a reserve. There were two gas tanks in the yard, later one was built on Washington Street near Fairbanks Street, and still later another on Morss Avenue at Walter Avenue.

In 1853 the town contracted for poles and lamps and gas for not more than twenty lamps at \$25 each. As the mains were extended the original number of twenty lamps increased to the hundreds, and in 1886 there were 272 gas street lamps, 75 oil lamps and 85 electric lights. In 1884, Edward J. Addicks of Delaware, bought several local gas companies, and in 1892 H. H. Rogers of New York came into control of the Brookline Gas Company and started paralleling Boston pipe lines, and a gas war was on. In 1896, the New England Gas and Coke Company started making water gas. James L. Richards bought the Brookline Company from Rogers, and by 1905 had succeeded in consolidating all the gas companies. Thereafter, the Brookline plant was discontinued with a result that the price of gas was lowered and its general use for cooking and heating was increased. The house on Kent Street, now the home of James P. Mackey, was one of the first piped for gas.

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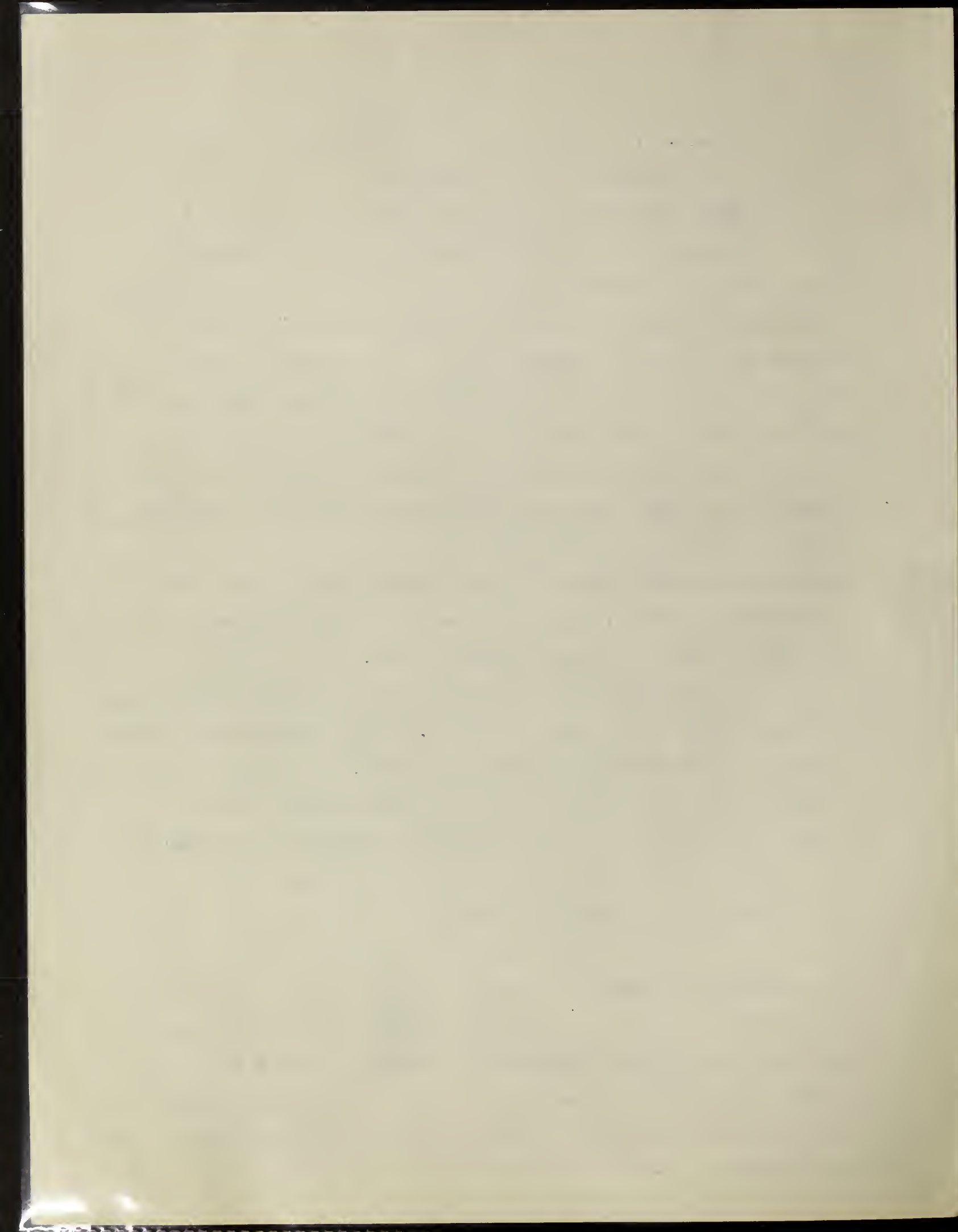


Mr. H. W. Burgett started the Brookline Electric Light Company. The dynamos were first installed in a building on Boylston Place and soon were moved to Pearl Street where a loud steam whistle was connected with the fire alarm and for some years rivaled the Brighton bull. In July 1885, the town contracted for sixty arc lights at fifty cents per night and the company installed 72 lights at the price for 60. Those lights displaced 212 gas lights. In May 1886, the Suburban Light and Power Company made the contract with the town and in 1888, the contract for electric lighting was made with the Brookline Gas Light Company which evidently had taken over the electric business. The early electric lights used carbons, the light was given off by the arc between carbons which required daily renewal and they were reached by climbing the poles. The Gas Company moved the dynamos to their new plant in Allston where the gas was made.

Another interesting business carried on in Brookline was a fishing tackle plant owned by John W. Shields, located on Cypress Street just southwest of the railroad bridge, and staffed almost entirely by girl operators. Mr. Shields developed a patented process for waterproofing fishing lines. He sold the right to use his process to New York concerns. His business was carried on by his son for some years and was ultimately discontinued.

Mr. John W. Koch, who, when he was eighty years of age would often take a walk to Dedham of a summer evening, had a shop on Washington Street about opposite Holden Street known as the American Screen Company where he made window screens with slender wooden frames reinforced with metal, that slid in tracks nailed to the window frames. This business was carried on by his family until very recently.

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Charles W. Holtzer came to this country from Germany in 1866 and after some years of employment with E. S. Ritchie & Sons, started manufacturing electrical devices with Mr. Newell in the basement of the Harvard Building at Harvard Square. In 1874, after four or five years, Mr. Holtzer moved to a factory erected on Boylston Street. He purchased the Catholic Church on Amden Place and Station Street in 1885 and moved his factory to the remodeled church. The pews were ripped out by teen-aged boys who invested the pennies found, in the purchasing of Washington pies which then cost twelve cents apiece. In 1911 the factory was destroyed by a spectacular fire, and the next morning burnt shingles were found as far away as Jamaica Pond. Several brick buildings had been built on adjoining land, and they with the rebuilt wooden factory are now in use by various business concerns. The electric business consisted of the manufacture of bells, alarms, annunciators, telephones and many other devices in a department called, "Sundries Dep't". In another department, small motors were made.

An electric automobile was made for Fisk Warren in 1891, and it was operated by motors and storage batteries. One pleasant morning, I saw the electric carriage resting, with the wheels in a vertical plane, on the northerly side of Fisher Avenue. Two years later a second car was built seating eight people, weighing 5100 pounds and capable of traveling sixteen miles per hour on a level road. The body of this car was built by Mr. Quinlan. These were the first electric carriages ever built.

The Seth W. Fuller and Holtzer partnership operated but for a few years. George E. Cabot joined the firm and upon the withdrawal of Fuller it became the Holtzer & Cabot firm. In 1889

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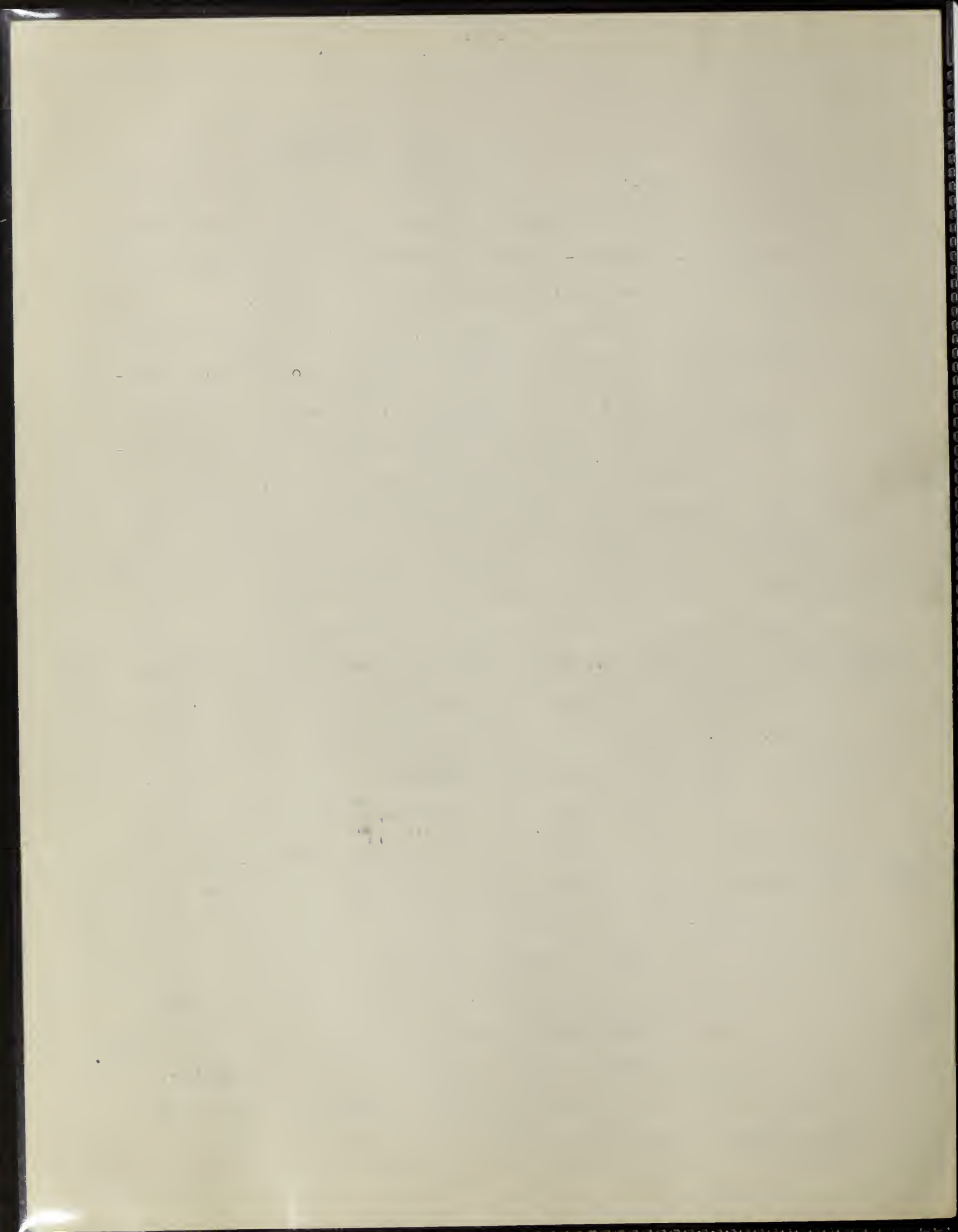


the business was incorporated and a few years later in 1892 Mr. Cabot retired. The business increased as the years went by and now it builds intercommunication systems used on Naval vessels and airplanes. Holtzer-Cabot is now located on Amory Street in Roxbury, having abandoned the Brookline site in 1915.

E. S. Ritchie and Sons, Inc., have a factory today on Cypress Street where the business of making philosophical instruments has been carried on for many years. It was established in 1850 and though the instruments were made in Brookline, the catalogue was issued from 243 Washington Street, Boston. The interest in Physics <sup>was</sup> fostered by courses in high schools and colleges, and the Ritchie instruments were of great assistance in developing the study of this subject; letters from teachers and physicists and the Bureau of Standards show the confidence and trust they placed in Mr. Ritchie. Laboratories are essential to the proper study of science and proper instruments are a necessity to laboratories. Mr. Ritchie in his long life, from 1814 to 1895, was an outstanding figure in the field of physics and applied science.

~~On September 9th, 1862 he took out his first patent on a nautical compass and another in April 1863. The Monitor, in its famous battle with the Merrimac used a Ritchie Compass on March 9, 1862. The English Navy was also a user as well as the U.S. Navy; the company has many testimonials from Navy Officers, for the efficiency of the compass. The Ritchie compass is hand made and did not lend itself to mass production, hence, during the war, Navy specifications were changed so that mass production, hence, during the war, Navy specifications were changed so that mass production the compass~~<sup>es</sup> might be made with machines.

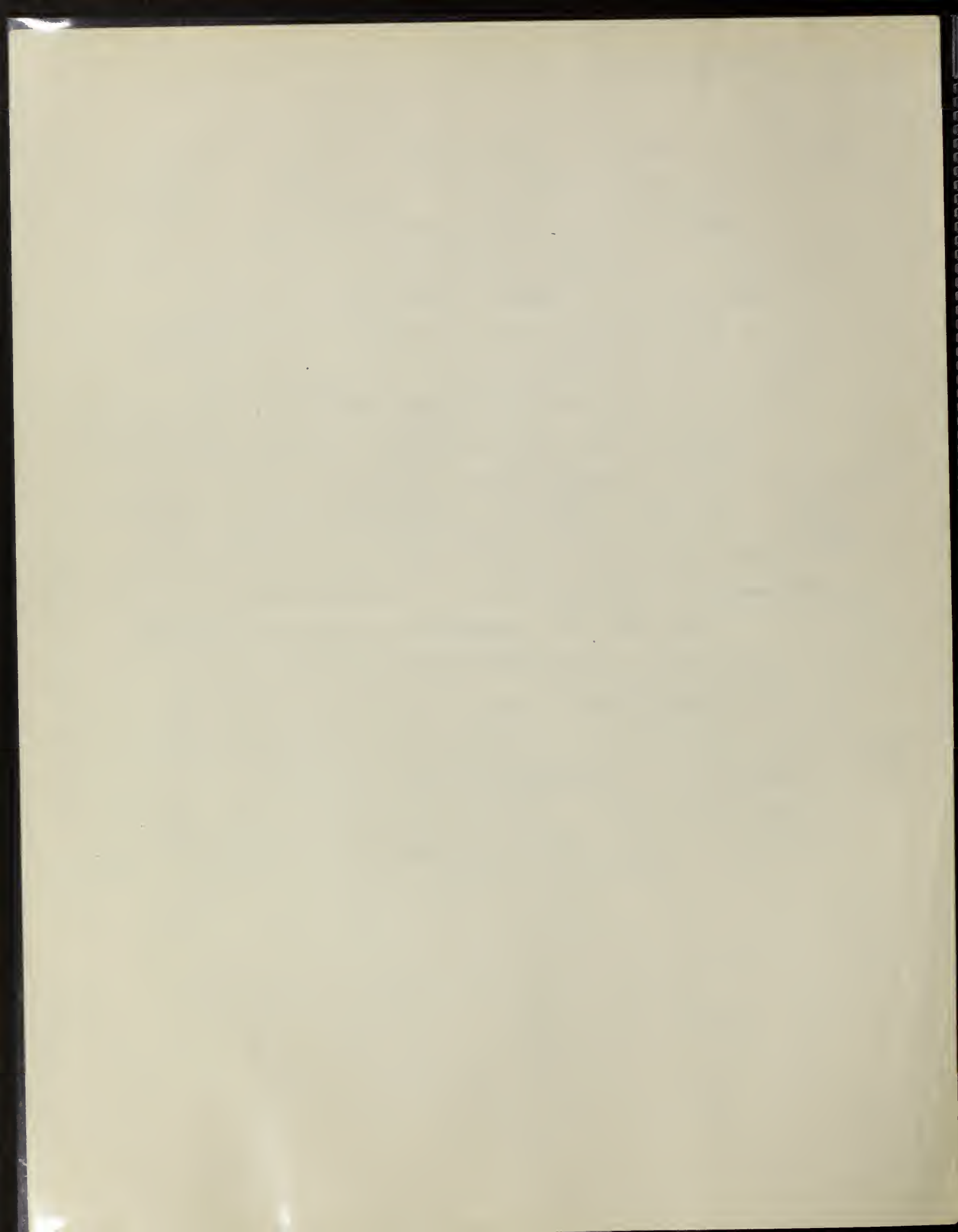
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Not long since a compass #2818 was found in a French sailing ship that was wrecked in 1871 on Long Island. The company records showed that this instrument was sold to Riggs & Brother, of Philadelphia, a concern still doing business with the company. A deep-sea diver found a compass at the bottom of the Pacific Ocean off the coast of southern California that was in usable condition; it was sold in 1927. There is on exhibition at the company's office an interesting compass made in 1868.

The first round radio antenna was invented at Ritchie's as was the Cabot receiver developed here. When Mr. Ritchie was seventy years old he invented a meter for recording the velocity of currents in water. The international reputation of the Ritchie instruments is well established and has been for years.

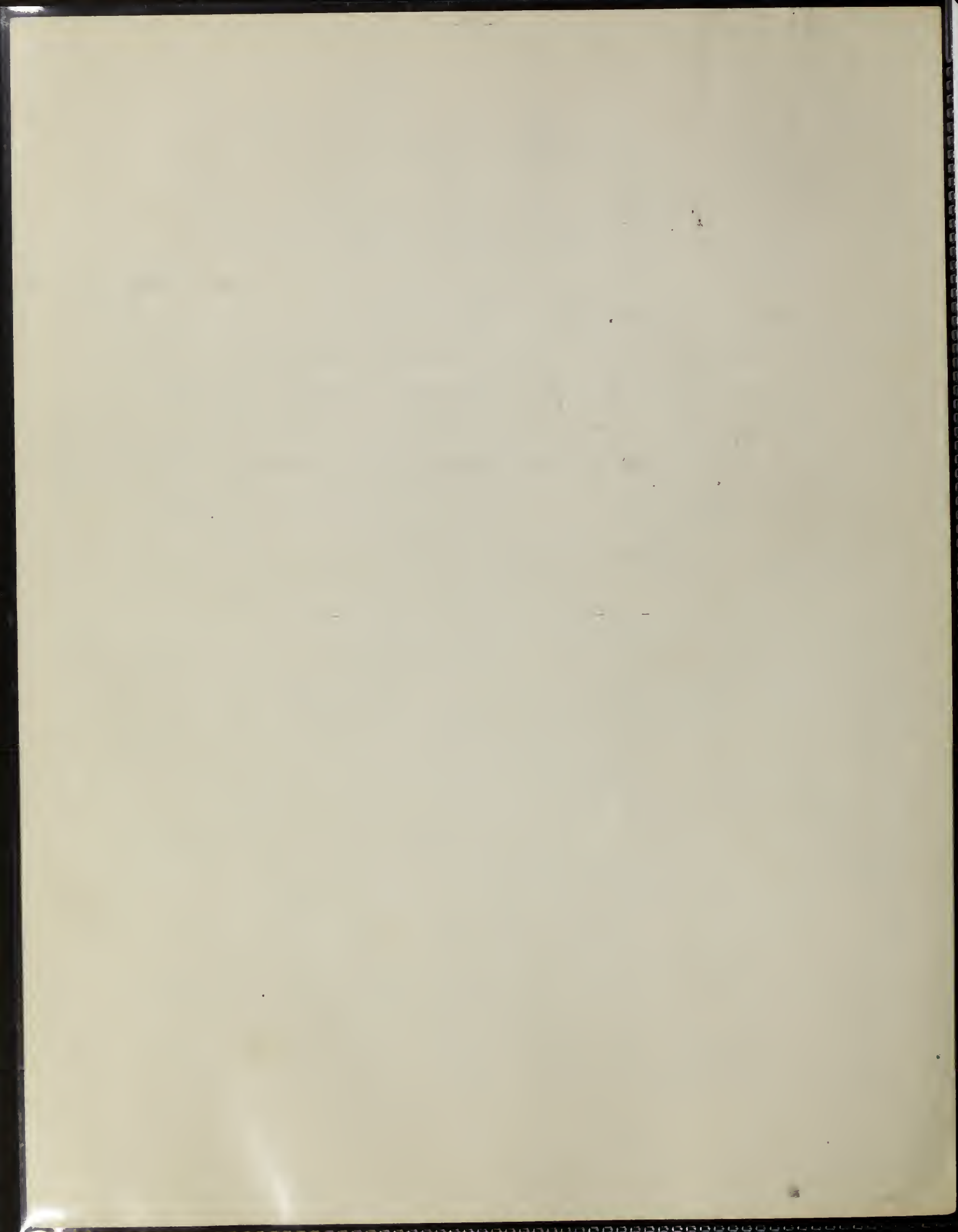
Only last year, a letter from Pakistan was delivered, although it was addressed only to "RITCHIE BOSTON". In the letter the correspondent asked for parts of an electric recorder that was very old; in fact, it was so old that none of the present employees remembered ever having heard of it! Here is a company, famous the world over, that has been operating in our midst for a century, of which, few of our people in Brookline are aware of its existence.





No paper on Historical Brookline would be complete without a mention of the Punch Bowl Tavern, which site was recently marked by our Society in recognition of the important part it played in the early history of the town. Although it was, in its day, a thriving industry, I have failed to mention it as such. Rather, let us roll back the years for two hundred or so, and imagine ourselves leaving here, in our sleighs, and driving down to the Tavern for what Miss Woods liked to call, a "gay party," and where, history tells, we will find a clearing house of intelligence, news and opinions of the people.

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Although not strictly a local industry, the cutting and distribution of ice was always an interesting sight. The ice used in Brookline came originally from Jamaica Pond just over the town line in Jamaica Plain. In 1890 this pond was taken into the Boston Park system and Hammond's Pond at the Newton line just off the Worcester Turnpike was used until the reconstruction of the pike in 1935. The ice was stored in ice houses adjacent to the ponds: one on Prince Street, Jamaica Plain, and the other on the southerly shore of Hammond's Pond. Sometimes a mild winter necessitated bringing ice from New Hampshire by rail to the freight yard on Pearl Street.

Cutting began when the ice was ten inches thick, and the pond became a scene of great industrial activity when the horses and men moved onto the ice. First the snow was cleared off with horse-drawn scoops; then a horse-drawn marking sled equipped with a vertical knife went over the area to be cut, marking it off in four foot squares so that it looked like a big checker board. A channel was then sawed out by hand from the marked area to the ice house, and the ice was sawed along the parallel markings to free the floes so that they could be pushed along the channel by men called grabbers who used long poles with sharp ends to pull the ice cakes. Then the floes were chiseled on the cross markings to separate the ice into cakes about four feet square. At the shore near the ice house the cakes were floated onto a mechanical hoist with an endless belt

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of iron links and wooden cleats and carried up into the ice house where they were pulled from the hoist and shaved to uniform thickness, and finally shoved down a slide to be stacked and insulated with hay for storage.

The old ice carts with their arched canvas covers, their scales and tongs, and their dripping baskets for shaving ice for special uses, were a familiar sight delivering ice to all the stores and homes through out the town.

This industry provided work for men and horses usually unemployed through the winter months. Of course it interrupted the hockey games and figure skating, but the cut-over areas usually froze over again quickly and new black ice delighted the skaters and hockey players. However, on Sundays all hockey games were moved over to Hammond's Pond, for Sunday playing was never allowed on Jamaica Pond.

